



An “Idea of Things in Kansas”

John Brown’s 1857 New England Speech

edited by Karl Gridley

In early January 1857, following his well-publicized year of guerrilla warfare waged on behalf of the free-state cause in eastern Kansas, John Brown embarked on a whirlwind speaking and fund-raising tour throughout New England. Brown, through the constant field reporting of James Redpath and William Phillips in Horace Greeley’s *New York Tribune* and Richard Hinton in the *Boston Traveller*, had become something of a celebrity in Boston and New York, even to the point of having a Broadway play produced about his exploits.¹

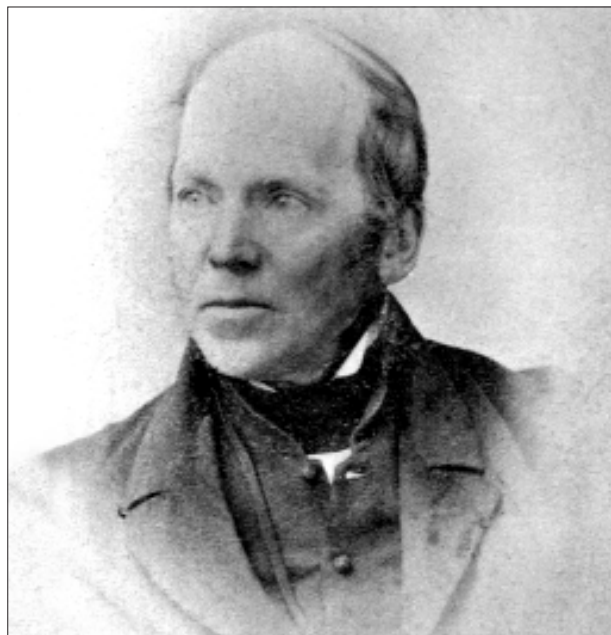
Born May 9, 1800, in Torrington, Connecticut, John Brown grew up in Hudson, Ohio, and the Western Reserve. As a young man he worked in Ohio and Pennsylvania as a tanner and wool broker. He married twice and fathered twenty children. By the 1830s Brown, a devout Calvinist, became increasingly involved in the abolitionist movement, becoming friends with men such as Gerrit Smith and Frederick Douglass. In the late 1840s he moved to North Elba in upstate New York to farm and assist former slave families living in the area. By 1855 five of Brown’s sons had moved from drouth-stricken Ohio to Kansas to settle near Osawatomie. They wrote their father often of the troubles in the area resulting from the struggle over whether Kansas would enter the Union as a free or slave state. John Brown Jr. wrote his father that they needed arms “more than we do bread.” Soon John Brown joined his sons at Brown’s Station, Kansas. Throughout late 1855 and 1856 Brown became an increasing force in the free-state movement, rejecting the Garrisonian “moral suasionist” approach to the Southern

Karl Gridley is an independent scholar living in Lawrence. He edited the guide *John Brown of Kansas: 1855–59*, published in 2000 by the Territorial Kansas Heritage Alliance in commemoration of the bicentennial of John Brown’s birth.

1. All three reporters subsequently published books specifically related to Kansas and John Brown: William Phillips, *The Conquest of Kansas by Missouri and Her Allies* (Boston: Phillips, Sampson and Co., 1856); James Redpath, *The Public Life of Captain John Brown* (Boston: Thayer and Eldridge, 1860); Richard J. Hinton, *John Brown and His Men* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1894).

Kansas History: A Journal of the Central Plains 27 (Spring–Summer 2004): 76–85.

One of Brown's first visits upon his return from Kansas to Boston was with his friend and benefactor Amos A. Lawrence (right), whom he had known since the 1840s. Lawrence was impressed with Brown, and although perhaps willfully unaware of the Pottawatomie killings and Brown's complicity in them, Lawrence agreed to contribute further funds to Brown's Kansas plans, calling him the "Miles Standish of Kansas."



"Slave Power" and embarking on a more militant and violent crusade to stop the spread of slavery into Kansas.²

One of Brown's first visits upon his return from Kansas to Boston was with his old friend and benefactor Amos A. Lawrence. The two had known each other since the 1840s when Brown, then a broker for the wool industry of Pennsylvania and Ohio, conducted business with the large Lawrence textile manufactory. Lawrence was impressed with Brown, and although perhaps willfully unaware of the Pottawatomie killings and Brown's complicity in them, Lawrence agreed to contribute further funds to Brown's Kansas plans, calling him the "Miles Standish of Kansas."³

Soon Brown was off, accompanied and assisted by a young, energetic agent of the National Kansas Committee, Franklin Sanborn, to address a funding committee of the

Massachusetts legislature.⁴ There, on February 18, Brown, along with his friend Edmund B. Whitman, delivered a speech that, for the most part, provided the template for the remainder of his New England speaking tour, including the speech given in Concord famously attended by Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau.⁵

Brown as a speaker was variously described. Recalling the speech later in his own "A Plea for Captain John Brown," Thoreau thought him something of "a volcano with an ordinary chimney-flue." Francis Wayland, after having heard Brown lecture in Worcester, wrote "John Brown, a flame of fire in action, was dull in speech."⁶ Franklin Sanborn thought Brown's voice to be "masculine, deep and metallic." Emerson felt that "everyone who has heard him speak has been impressed alike by his simple, artless goodness joined with his sublime courage."⁷

2. For a detailed analysis of Brown's early life before he came to Kansas, see Richard O. Boyer, *The Legend of John Brown: A Biography and a History* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1973); Merrill Peterson, *John Brown: The Legend Revisited* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 2002); Louis A. DeCaro, "Fire from the Midst of You": *A Religious Life of John Brown* (New York: New York University Press, 2002).

3. William Lawrence, *Life of Amos A. Lawrence* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1888), 125. Brown already had been fully implicated in the Pottawatomie Massacre in a series of affidavits collected in the widely distributed "Howard Report," published as *Kansas Affairs, Special Committee Appointed to Investigate the Troubles in the Territory of Kansas*, 34th Cong., 1st sess., 1856, H. Rept. 200, serial 869, 1193–99.

4. See Franklin B. Sanborn, *Life and Letters of John Brown* (Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1885), 347–48; Stephen B. Oates, *To Purge This Land With Blood: A Biography of John Brown* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984), 181–83.

5. Nine months later, at Edmund B. Whitman's farm near Lawrence, John Brown began to assemble the nucleus of his Harpers Ferry raiders. See *Confession of John E. Cook* in Redpath, *The Public Life of Captain John Brown*, 197–98; Sanborn, *Life and Letters of John Brown*, 423–24.

6. Oswald Garrison Villard, *John Brown: A Biography Fifty Years After* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1910), 274, 282.

7. Oates, *To Purge This Land With Blood*, 184.

TO THE FRIENDS OF FREEDOM.

The undersigned, whose individual means were exceedingly limited when he first engaged in the struggle for Liberty in Kansas, being now still more destitute and no less anxious than in time past to continue his efforts to sustain that cause, is induced to make this earnest appeal to the Friends of Freedom throughout the United States, in the firm belief that his call will not go unheeded. I ask all honest lovers of Liberty and Human Rights, both male and female, to hold up my hands by contributions of pecuniary aid, either as counties, cities, towns, villages, societies, churches or individuals.

I will endeavor to make a judicious and faithful application of all such means as I may be supplied with. Contributions may be sent in drafts to W. H. D. CALLENDER, Cashier State Bank, Hartford, Ct. It is my intention to visit as many places as I can during my stay in the States, provided I am first informed of the disposition of the inhabitants to aid me in my efforts, as well as to receive my visit. Information may be communicated to me (care of Masons Hall) at Springfield, Mass. Will editors of newspapers friendly to the cause kindly send the manuscript, and also give this some half dozen insertions? Will either gentlemen or ladies, or both, who love the cause, volunteer to take up the business? It is with no little sacrifice of personal feeling that I appear in this manner before the public.

JOHN BROWN.

Brown was disappointed by the overall response to his pleas for support. In the March 4 New York Tribune Brown had published an appeal entitled "To the Friends of Freedom" in the hope of securing more backing, but the ad provided little financial return.

Be that as it may, Brown's objectives were clear and his need great. Actually he had two fund-raising objectives on this eastern trip. His efforts on behalf of Kansas proved disappointing. But Brown received some welcome assurance regarding the welfare of his wife, Mary, and his two young daughters, living nearly destitute in North Elba, New York. Through the assistance of Amos Lawrence and George Luther Stearns, Brown was able to pay off the farm mortgage to Gerrit Smith and feel some security that his family would be looked after should he die fighting for the "cause of Freedom in Kansas." Lawrence wrote to Brown on March 20: "In case anything shld occur while you are engaged in a great and good cause to shorten yr life, you may rest assured that yr wife & children shall be cared for more liberally than you now propose. the family of 'Capt John Brown of Ossawatimie' will not be turned out to starve in this country, until Liberty herself is driven out."⁸

Still, Brown felt greatly let down by the overall response to his pleas for support. He wrote to William Barnes expressing his "sad heart having failed to secure even the means of equipping; to say nothing of feeding

men."⁹ In the March 4 *New York Tribune* Brown had published an appeal entitled "To the Friends of Freedom" in the hope of securing more backing, but the ad provided little financial return.

To secure the basic necessities required to keep a company operating in the field, Brown drew up a requisition order for Horace White, assistant secretary of the National Kansas Committee, that gave specifics. White agreed to acquire and accompany the material to Lawrence on Brown's behalf.¹⁰

While in hiding from federal marshals at the home of Judge Thomas Russell, Brown composed a bitter "Farewell" to the Boston community. It chided Boston's high society for its hypocrisy and failure to support the cause of freedom in Kansas, the Brahmin elite all the while honoring and revering their own antiquated, and to Brown now hollow, monuments to freedom celebrating the Revolutionary War.

One success Brown did enjoy, however, was the formation in Boston of a group, later known as the Secret Six, that would provide support to a plan much broader than the fight in Kansas. The six men (Gerrit Smith, George

8. Lawrence, *Life of Amos A. Lawrence*, 128. Original letter in John Brown Collection, Library and Archives Division, Kansas State Historical Society.

9. Villard, *John Brown*, 283.

10. Sanborn, *Life and Letters of John Brown*, 360-62. Original memorandum in Brown Collection.

A BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF JOHN BROWN

- MAY 9, 1800:** Birth of John Brown in Torrington, Connecticut.
- 1805:** Brown family moves to Hudson, Ohio.
- 1812:** John Brown herds cattle, for his father, from Ohio to Detroit to supply General William Hull's forces during the War of 1812.
- 1837:** Following the murder of abolitionist editor Elijah P. Lovejoy, Brown vows to "consecrate my life to the destruction of slavery."
- 1846:** Brown is photographed by African American daguerreotypist Augustus Washington in Hartford, Connecticut. (The daguerreotype is now in the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, Washington, D.C.)
- 1855:** Brown follows his sons to Kansas Territory, arriving at Brown's Station, west of Osawatomie, on October 7.
- DECEMBER 1855:** Brown participates in the Wakarusa War at Lawrence. Forms the "Liberty Guards."
- MAY 24–25, 1856:** Brown leads the Potawatomie Massacre, murdering five proslavery men, following the sack of Lawrence on May 21.
- JUNE 2, 1856:** Brown's forces defeat those of Henry Clay Pate at the Battle of Black Jack in southeastern Douglas County.
- AUGUST 30, 1856:** Brown's forces are defeated at the Battle of Osawatomie. His son Frederick is killed.
- 1857:** Brown tours New England speaking and raising funds for his Kansas crusade. He returns to Kansas in November to begin recruiting men for his planned raid on Harpers Ferry, Virginia.
- 1858:** Brown attends the Chatham Convention in Canada.
- JUNE 1858:** Following the Marais des Cygnes Massacre, Brown returns to southeastern Kansas.
- DECEMBER 20, 1858:** Brown leads a raid into western Missouri to free eleven slaves.
- OCTOBER 16–18, 1859:** John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry.
- NOVEMBER 2, 1859:** John Brown sentenced to death.
- DECEMBER 2, 1859:** John Brown hanged at Charlestown, Virginia.

Luther Stearns, Theodore Parker, Franklin Sanborn, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, and Samuel Gridley Howe), all prominent New England reformers with strong abolitionist sentiments, saw in John Brown the manifestation and means of their desire to break the slave power in the South.¹¹

Brown did have one last errand to make before starting back for Kansas. The Battle of Black Jack near Baldwin City, Kansas, left Brown with a number of war souvenirs, one of which he had used as a prop during his New England speeches: Henry Clay Pate's Bowie knife. Brown visited blacksmith Charles Blair in Collinsville, Connecticut, and showed him the knife, asking if he could "make a thousand like it to be attached to poles about six feet long." Thus originated the famous pikes of Harpers Ferry, which Brown intended to use as arms for liberated slaves. At the time, however, Brown claimed they "would be a capital weapon to place in the hands of the settlers in Kansas, to keep in their cabins to defend themselves against 'border ruffians or wild beasts.'"¹²

The speech, as transcribed here, contains Brown's personal notations for emphasis including his underlining of individual words.¹³ For props, along with Pate's Bowie knife, Brown dramatically rattled the chains that were used to hobble John Brown Jr. at Camp Sackett, and he brandished a charred Bible taken from the ruins of Brown's Station. Brown later gave the Bowie knife to George Luther Stearns, and the chains to Henry Ward Beecher.

Of Brown's education and grammar Thoreau wrote:

He did not go to Harvard. He was not fed on the pap that is there furnished. As he phrased it, "I know no more grammar than one of your calves." But he went to the University of the West, where he studied the science of Liberty; and, having taken his degrees, he finally commenced the public practice of humanity in Kansas. Such were his humanities—he would have left a Greek accent slanting the wrong way, and righted a falling man.¹⁴

11. See Jeffrey Rossbach, *Ambivalent Conspirators, John Brown, The Secret Six, and a Theory of Slave Violence* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983).

12. Redpath, *The Public Life of Captain John Brown*, 193.

13. Brown Collection. Sanborn, *Life and Letters of John Brown*, 242, describes the document as "part of the notes which Brown drew up for his speeches at Hartford, Boston, Concord and other New England towns." The notes are transcribed, with heavily edited grammar and corrected spellings, in *ibid.*, 243–46. A similar set of notes, although incomplete, was donated to the Kansas State Historical Society in 1947 by Brown scholar Boyd B. Stutler. For a full transcription of these notes, see Redpath, *The Public Life of Captain John Brown*, 177–82.

14. Redpath, *The Public Life of Captain John Brown*, 27. Quotation "A Plea for Captain John Brown, 1859" in James Redpath, *Echoes of Harper's Ferry* (Boston: Thayer and Eldridge, 1860).

IDEA OF THINGS IN KANSAS

I propose in order to make this meeting as useful; & interesting as I can:

1st to try; & give a correct idea of the condition of things in Kansas, as they were: while I was there; & as I suppose they still are, as far as the great question at issue is concerned. & here let me remark that in Kansas the question is never raised of a man: Is he a Democrat. Is he a Republican? The questions there raised are Is he a Free State man? Or is he a proslavery man? The machinery of a territorial government not yet in motion the proslavery settlers from the slave states, many of them turned to be the most determined Free State men; & fighting in all their Battles. The comparative strength of the parties; as regards numbers, intelligence, Industry, & good habits generally.

2d Tell my own errand from the territory. Get the means of supporting my family, of supporting men finding them equipage &c. The kind of men, & emigrants I want to find. The effect of good or bad Pioneer emigration on new settlements.

3d Statement of facts within my own knowledge.

I saw while in Missouri in the Fall of 1855 large numbers on their way to Kansas to Vote; & also returning after they had so done as they said. I together with Four of my Sons were called out to help defend Lawrence in the Fall of 1855 & traveled most of the way on foot; & during a dark Night, a distance of 35 Miles: where we were detained with some 500 others or thereabouts from 5 to 15 days: say an average of 10 days at a cost to each pr day of \$1,50 as wages to say nothing of the actual loss & suffering it occasioned. Many of them leaving their families at home sick, their crops not secured, their houses unprepared for Winter, & many of them without

houses at all. This was the case with myself, & all my sons: who were unable to get any house built after our return. Loss in that case as wages alone; would amount to \$7500, Loss & suffering in consequence cannot be estimated. I saw at that time the body of the murdered Barbour;¹⁵ & was present when his Wife, & other friends were brought in to see him as he lay in the clothes he had on when killed. No very pleasant sight. I went, in the Spring of last year with some of my sons amongst the Buford men;¹⁶ in the character of a Surveyor, to see & hear from them their business into the territory. This took us from our work I and numerous others in the Spring of last year traveled some 10 Miles or over on foot, to meet & advise as to what should be done to meet the gathering storm. This occasioned much loss of time. I also with many other about the same time traveled on foot a similar distance to attend a meeting of Judge [Sterling G.] Catos Court; to find out what kind of Laws he intended to enforce. This occasioned further loss of time.

I with Six Sons; & a Son in Law were again called out to defend Lawrence May 20th & 21st [1856] and traveled most of the way there on foot: & during the night; being 35 miles. From that date neither of us could do any work about our homes; but lost our whole time until we left in Oct last; excepting one of my sons, who had a few Weeks to devote to the care of his own & his Brothers family who had been burned out of their houses while the Two men were prisoners.¹⁷

From about the 20th of May of last year Hundreds of men like ourselves lost their whole time:

15. Thomas W. Barber, an Ohio abolitionist and member of the Bloomington Guards, was shot west of Lawrence during the Wakarusa War in an encounter with a proslavery posse from Leecompton.

16. Major Jefferson Buford was a leader of a Southern proslavery military contingent in Kansas Territory at the time.

17. The sack of Lawrence had occurred on May 21, 1856. Brown, four of his sons, and two other settlers retaliated on May 24–25, killing five proslavery settlers along Pottawatomie Creek in Franklin County. Brown rarely spoke of this and does not refer to the killings in this speech. His two oldest sons, John Jr. and Jason, did not participate in the Pottawatomie Massacre but were captured and accused of complicity in the crime.

& entirely failed of securing any kind of crop whatever. I believe it safe to say that 500 Free State men lost each 120 days at \$1,50 pr day, which would be to say nothing of attendant losses \$90,000 Dollars.

I saw the ruins of many Free State mens houses, at different places in the Territory; together with Stacks of grain wasted, & burning to the amount of say \$50 000 Dollars. Making in lost time & destruction of property more than \$150,000 Dollars. On or about the 30th May last Two of my Sons with several others were imprisoned without other crime than opposition to Bogus enactments; & most barbarously treated for a time.¹⁸ One being held about One Month; the other about Four months. Both had their families in Kansas; & destitute of houses; being burned out after they were imprisoned. In this burning; all the Eight were sufferers; as we all had our effects at the Two houses. One of my sons had his oxen taken from him at this time & never recovered them. Here is the chain with which one of [my sons, John J.] was confined after the cruelty, sufferings, & anxiety he underwent had rendered him a Maniac. Yes a Maniac.

On the 2d of June last my son in Law was terribly wounded; supposed to be mortally; & two other Free State men at Black Jack.¹⁹ On the 6th or 7th of June last one of my sons was wounded by accident in camp supposed to be mortally; & may prove a cripple for life. In Aug last I was present & saw the mangled & shockingly disfigured boddy of the mudedred Hoyt of Deerfield, Mass: brought into our camp.²⁰ I knew him well. I saw several other Free State men who were either killed or wounded whose names I cannot

now remember. I saw Dr Graham who was a prisoner with the Ruffians on the 2d of June last & was present when they wounded him, in an attempt to Kill him as he was trying to save himself from being murdered by them during the fight of Black Jack. I know that for much of the time during the last Summer the travel over a portion of the Territory was entirely cut off: & that none but bodies of armed men dared to move at all. I know that for a considerable time the Mails on different routes were entirely stoped: & that notwithstanding there were abundant U S troops at hand to escort the Mails, that such escorts were not furnished as they might; or ought to have been. I saw while it was standing; & afterward saw the ruins of a most valua house full of good articles & stoves: which had been burned by the Ruffians, for a highly civilized, inteligent, & most exemplary Christian Indian: for being suspected of favouring Free State men. He is known as Ottawa Jones; or John T Jones. In Sept last I visited a beautiful little Free State Town called Stanton on the North side of the Osage or Meridezene [Marais des Cygnes] river as it is called: from which every inhabitant had fled (being in fear of their lives) after having built them at a heavy expense a strong Block House or wooden fort for their protection. Many of them had left their effects liable to be destroyed or carried off not being able to remove them. This was a most gloomy scene; & like a visit to a vast sepulcre. During last Summer & Fall deserted Houses, & Cornfields were to be met with in almost every direction South of the Kansas river. I saw the burning of Osawatomie by a body of some 400 Ruffians, & of Franklin [near Lawrence] afterwards by some 2700 men. The first named on Aug 30th; the last named Sept 14th or 15th. Gov [John W.] Geary had been for some time in the territory; & might have saved Franklin with perfect ease. It would have cost the U S One Dollar to have saved Franklin. I

18. The "Bogus enactments" refers to the laws regarding slavery imposed by the proslavery Kansas territorial legislature, elected in March 1855, by stuffed ballot boxes and intimidation of voters by militias from western Missouri.

19. John Brown and Samuel T. Shore fought and defeated a larger force under Henry Clay Pate at the Battle of Black Jack in southeastern Douglas County on June 2, 1856.

20. David Starr Hoyt was killed on Washington Creek on August 11, precipitating the Battle of Fort Saunders on August 15.

To secure the basic necessities required to keep a company operating in the field, Brown drew up this memorandum containing a requisition order of specific needs. Horace White, assistant secretary of the National Kansas Committee, agreed to acquire and accompany the material to Lawrence on Brown's behalf. The original "Memorandum" is in the John Brown Collection at the Kansas State Historical Society.

Memorandum of articles wanted, as an outfit for fifty volunteers to serve under my direction during the Kansas war - on for such specified time as they may each enlist for, together with estimated cost of same delivered in Lawrence or Leake	
2 substantial (but nothing) baggage Waggon with good gear	200.00
4 good servicable Waggon Horses	400.
2 sets strong plain Harness	50.
100 good Heavy Blankets say a 2, or 2,50	200.
8 substantial long sided tents	100.
8 large Camp Kettles	12.
50 Tin Basins	5.
50 Iron Spoons	2.
4 plain strong Saddles + Bridles	80.
4 Buffs + Ropes + Pairs	5.
8 Wooden Pails	2.
8 Axes + Pickers	12.
8 Digging Bars (long side)	8.
8 large sided Coffee Pots	10.
8 do do Spades or like Green	10.
8 do do Iron Pans	6.
12 Spades + Shovels	18.
6 Mattocks	6.
2 Weeks provisions for men + horses	150.
fund for horse hire + feed, loss + damage of same	50.
	\$ 1774.

with Five sick and wounde Sons, & Son-in-Law; were obliged for some time to lie on the ground without shelter, our Boots, & clothes worn out, destitute of money, & at times almost in a State of starvation; & dependant on the charities of the Christian Indian, & his Wife: whom I before named. I saw in Sept last a Mr Parker who I well know; with his Head all bruised over, & his

Throat partly cut; having before been draged sick out of the house of Ottawa Jones the Indian (when it was burned;) & thrown for dead over the bank of the Ottawa Creek. I saw Three mangled bodies of Three young men, Two of which were dead; & had lain on the open ground for about 18 Hours for the Flies to work at; the other living with Twenty Buck Shot, & Bullet holes in

him. One of those Two dead: was my own Son.²¹ I know that many others whose names I cannot now remember suffered terrible hardships, exposures, privations & cruelties such as I have named. I well know that on or about the 14th Sept last a large force of Missourians; & other Ruffians numbering 2800 (as stated by Gov Geary) invaded the territory, burned Franklin; & while the smoke of that place was going up behind them: they on the same day, made their appearance in full view of & within about a mile of Lawrence. & I know of no possible reason why they did not attack, & burn that place except that about 100 Free State men volunteered to go out on the open plain before the Town. & there gave them the offer of a fight: which they declined after getting some few scattering shots from our men; & then retreated back towards Franklin. I saw that whole thing. The government troops at this time were with Gov Geary at Lecompton: a distance of Twelve Miles only from Lawrence; & notwithstanding several runners had been to advise him in good time of the approach, or of the setting out of the enemy; who had to march some Forty Miles, to reach Lawrence; he did not; on that memorable occasion get a single soldier on to the ground, untill after the enemy had retreated back to Franklin: & had been gone for more than Five Hours. He did get troops there about midnight afterwards, & that is the way he saved Lawrence as he boasts of doing; in his Message to the Bogus Legislature. This was just the kind of protection the Administration & its tools have afforded the Free State settlers of Kansas from the first.

It cost the U S more than half a Million for a year past to harrass poor Free State settlers, in Kansas, & to violate all Law, & all right, Moral, & Constitutional for the sole, & only purpose, of forcing Slavery uppon that Territory. I chalenge this whole Nation to prove before God or

21. Brown's youngest son, Frederick, was shot dead just prior to the Battle of Osawatimie by Reverend Martin White, a proslavery advocate riding into town in advance of the larger forces of John W. Reid.

mankind to contrary. Who paid this money to enslave the settlers of Kansas; & worry them out? I say nothing in this estimate of the money wasted by Congress in the management of this horribly tyranical, & Damnable affair. Answer Questions

I am trying to raise from \$ 20, to 25 000, Dollars in the Free States to enable me to continue my efforts in the cause of Freedom. Will the people of Connecticut my native State afford me some aid in this undertaking? Will the Gentlemen & Ladies of Hartford where I make my first Appeal in this State: set the example of an earnest effort? Will some Gentleman or Lady take hold & try what can be done by small contributions from Counties Cities Towns, Societies or Churches? I think the little beggar children in the streets are sufficiently interested to warrant or in some other way their collecting if there was any need of it to secure the object. I was told that the Newspapers in a certain City were dressed in mourning on hearing that I was killed & scalped in Kansas; but I did not know of it untill I reached the place. Much good it did me. In the same place I met a more cool reception than in any other place where I have stoped. If my friends will hold up my hands while I live: I will freely absolve them from any expence over me when I am dead. I do not ask for pay but shall be most grateful for all the assistance I can get.

Although Brown was disappointed with the level of support he received for continuing his campaign in Kansas, he did manage, through the auspices of the National Kansas Committee and individual donations, to acquire a considerable arsenal of weapons and had them shipped to his training base in Tabor, Iowa. By November 1857, however, Brown's attention was becoming more fixed on an invasion of Virginia in hope of sparking a slave rebellion. Although he spent much of 1858 in southeastern Kansas, the arsenal he acquired in 1857 eventually would be shipped to the Kennedy farm in Maryland, from which Brown would launch his famous and fateful raid on Harpers Ferry, Virginia, on October 16, 1859. 